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Eminem Gets Two Years' Probation In Weapon Case

Rapper must refrain from excessive alcohol and drug use and can't own or possess weapons.
By archive-Norb-Franz
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MOUNT CLEMENS, Michigan — Eminem avoided jail time when a judge sentenced him on Tuesday to two years' probation for carrying a concealed weapon.

But the rapper must refrain from excessive alcohol or drug use for those two years, undergo counseling, avoid "assaultive behavior" and can't own or possess firearms or other weapons. Macomb County Circuit Judge Antonio P. Viviano also told Eminem he must get the court's permission if he wants to leave the continental United States during that period.

Prosecutors had sought a jail sentence of four to six months after Eminem pleaded guilty to the felony in February in a plea-bargain agreement (see [article id="1439392"]"Eminem Pleads Guilty To Carrying Concealed Weapon"[/article]). "I don't think it's a slap on the wrist," Viviano said of the penalty he did impose.

"I'm glad the judge and the courts treated me fair and as a human being," Eminem told reporters. "I just want to get it behind me and get back to spending time with my little girl and making music."

The 28-year-old rapper, who wore a black suit to court, made no other comment, and court officers and one of his lawyers led him to a rear corridor elevator.

Eminem, born Marshall Bruce Mathers III, was originally charged with pistol-whipping a man who was allegedly kissing his wife, Kim, outside a Warren, Michigan, bar on June 4, 2000. Prosecutors dropped a charge of assault with a dangerous weapon as part of the plea agreement.

Assistant prosecutor David Portuesi called the sentence appropriate, though he said, "We had requested some incarceration to impact on him and deter others" from committing crimes.

During the probation period, Eminem will have to undergo periodic drug and alcohol testing. And the judge ordered him to have no contact with John Guerra, the man he had been accused of assaulting outside the Hot Rock Sports Bar and Music Cafe.

Eminem was fined $2,500 and assessed $5,000 in court costs that he must pay within 30 days. The judge directed the nation's hottest rapper to pay $60 to the local crime victims' rights fund, plus $30 a month in supervision fees over the course of the probation.

The judge warned Eminem that if he violates any of the terms of his probation or has any other run-ins with the law, he could be sentenced to the full five years the concealed-weapons charge carries in Michigan.

About two dozen fans and a handful of relatives attending the hearing. Eminem's mother, Debbie Mathers-Briggs, who is suing him because of remarks he made about her in published interviews (see [article id="1439183"]"Eminem's Mother May Drop Defamation Lawsuit"[/article]), told reporters she didn't want her son sent to jail.

"I'll never stop loving a son," Mathers-Briggs said. "You may have differences and problems, but you never stop loving your son."

Eminem's lawyers had complained recently that Macomb County Prosecutor Carl Marlinga had singled out their famous client because of his music and lyrics. Marlinga countered that the artist was treated like anyone else.

Fame and fortune "should not help him, nor should they hurt him," Walter Piszczatowski, one of four Eminem lawyers who attended the sentencing, told Judge Viviano.

"Mr. Mathers has told the truth," Piszczatowski said. "He has not hid behind anything. He has fully cooperated with police. He does not take this matter lightly."

Piszczatowski said he was confident Eminem could overcome this legal obstacle, "so that he can focus on what he does best — which is making music and entertaining his fans."

The rapper's legal troubles are not over.

In addition to his mother's lawsuit, Eminem is being sued by Guerra for at least $25,000. Eminem denies striking Guerra with the unloaded 9 mm semiautomatic pistol, defense lawyer Brian Legghio said.

The rap superstar also awaits trial in neighboring Oakland County for an incident a few hours before the encounter with Guerra. He is accused of carrying a concealed weapon and brandishing a firearm in public during a June 3 confrontation with an employee of the Insane Clown Posse's record label outside a Royal Oak, Michigan, car stereo shop (see [article id="1435337"]"Eminem Denied Plea Bargain In ICP Case"[/article]).

Oakland County prosecutors have said they would not request jail time. The next hearing in that case is scheduled for April 23.

Do you think Eminem's sentence was fair? Share your thoughts in our MTV News Poll.